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## NARRATIVE AND SPEECH SCANSION IN HOMER

BY A. SHEWAN

In the *American Journal of Philology*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 280 ff., Mr. Drewitt discusses the  $-\sigma\sigma$ - forms in Homer. In some preliminary remarks he assures us it is "well known" that the scansion of the two epics is "graded in a rather curious way." The narrative of *Il.\** is stricter in its versification than that of *B<sup>2</sup>*, etc., which is again stricter than the narrative of the *Odyssey*.<sup>1</sup> Speech is worse than narrative, and Odyssean speech inferior to Iliadic. "Among the changes in the verse, four stand out most clearly. The lines are such that they need to be recited faster; verse-pause becomes conventional, not functional; ictus is less emphasized; and there is a *growing disregard of gratuitous spondees*." That all this is well known will be admitted by nobody; what is meant is merely that Mr. Drewitt believes he has proved it. It may be useful therefore to test the evidence in one department, viz., in regard to what are designated gratuitous spondees. It consists of (1) "the distribution of the temporal augment," (2) "scansions like  $\kappa\alpha\lambda|\acute{o}s$ , etc.," and (3) "*though perhaps not so clearly*, the handling of the  $-\sigma\sigma$ - forms."

Mr. Drewitt's two papers on the subject of the augment (*CQ*, VI, 44 ff., and 104 ff.) were criticized in *CP*, VII, 397 ff.; see also VIII, 349 ff., and IX, 189 ff. Nothing, so far as I am aware, has been added to these statements of his case, which was shown to be based on complete misappreciation of the statistics. His assertion in the course of the foregoing discussion that "spondaic datives in  $-\epsilon\sigma\sigma\iota$  go up by leaps and bounds" was challenged, but does not appear to have been made good. These forms play a part in the present paper, but, before noticing them, reference may be made to the third piece of evidence mentioned above, viz., the scansion  $\kappa\alpha\lambda|\acute{o}s$ . This is not, I think, the first time that the statement has been made, and it does not appear to lose *vires eundo*, for on p. 296 of the present paper it is said that the difference between the scansion of *Il.\** and that of the *Odyssey* "comes out nowhere better than in the treatment of words like  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda|\acute{o}s$ ,  $\kappa\alpha\lambda|\acute{o}s$ , etc. The divergence here is *glaringly obvious*, and

<sup>1</sup> *Il.\** means the *Iliad* without B 489-end, Θ, I, K, Ψ, Ω, which are called *B<sup>2</sup>*, etc.

must be eventually admitted by all who are interested in Homer." On the contrary, it may be emphatically denied even in regard to these two prominent type words.

The occurrences of the word *καλός* in the *Odyssey* are 150 to 139 in the *Iliad*, or, allowing for the smaller area of the former, 4 in it to every 3 of the *Iliad*. We may therefore expect to find *καλ|ός*, which is quite familiar to Il.\* preponderating in the same proportion in the *Odyssey*. Now there are in all 47 instances of the scansion, 16 in the *Iliad* and 31 in the *Odyssey*. That looks bad. But let us compare the occurrences in the purest and most ancient tract, Il.\* narrative, with the latest and most depraved portion of the poetry, Odyssean speech. The figures are 9 to 16, or, on an equality of number of lines, about 12 to 16. The degeneration through centuries is far from staggering! But, if we observe that *καλ|ός* occurs in four duplicate phrases in Odyssean speech, and in perhaps one in Il.\* narrative, and remember that the word *καλός* is used more frequently in the *Odyssey* than in the *Iliad*, the balance of depravity is really with the latter. And the speech of the *Odyssey* has, proportionally, far fewer than its narrative, which is strange indeed.

"*ἄλλος* is one of many words which, for reasons peculiar to the poet or poets and the subject-matter, are much more commonly used in speech, there being 8 occurrences there for every 3 in narrative. Now the scansion *ἄλλ|ος* is found in all 155 times. It appears 28 times in Il.\* narrative and 63 in Odyssean speech, or, on an equality of lines, about 35 to 63, which, if we bear in mind the proportion of the total occurrences of *ἄλλος* in speech and narrative respectively, again leaves a margin in favor of Odyssean speech. And anyone who carefully scrutinizes and classifies the occurrences of this word in the two poems will assuredly say that the idea of any difference between them in regard to its scansion is not to be entertained. The rashness with which the scansion of the two words is forced on us does not incline us to have confidence in the present manipulation of figures. If there is no real difference between so-called late and early in a case in which it is affirmed that there is a "glaringly obvious" divergence, we may be prepared for still greater weakness in this whole paper on the *-σσ-* forms, in regard to which the difference is admitted to be "not so clearly" perceptible.

The method adopted for the exploitation of these forms is as bad as before. There is the same deliberate neglect of essential matters. The distinction inside speech between colloquy and narrative of past events is ignored. There is no reference to the very different lengths of the six sections, Il.\* B<sup>2</sup>, etc., Odyssean speech and narrative, into which the poems are divided. Il.\* excludes Θ, no reason being given. It includes A, though to Mr. Drewitt A is thoroughly "Odyssean," and the *Apaté*, and Nestor's tale in Δ, and the *Hoplopoiia*, though these have all the same taint. MNΞO are degenerate, NEO being deemed "extremely late," but they are nevertheless retained in the earliest section, which is thus an extraordinary collection of bits ancient and modern. The *Odyssey* is a unit; there is never a word of *Telemachy*, *Tisis*, *Bogenkampf*, etc. The *Apologoi* are treated as wholly speech. Subject-matter as influencing vocabulary is never referred to; the repetitions which it causes are of no account in the calculations. Chance is disregarded; any variation in the figures from arithmetical proportion must be due to degeneration. Passages are assumed to be early, earlier, or earliest, or "late work" or "very late indeed," just as may be necessary, and the argument is helped out by a special terminology of which exceeding great use is made. An objectionable phenomenon may be disposed of at once by calling it a "speech-phrase," a "petrification," a "shift," a "displacement," or the like, so that *petitio principii* and assumption are writ large over the whole paper. It is not difficult, with such munitions, to make havoc of the poetry.

Worst of all, a fundamental difference between speech and narrative in the matter of inflections and vocabulary is completely ignored. There are a multitude of forms, words, and phrases which can appear only in speech, and that is the only known explanation of any differences there may be between the versification of Homeric speech and that of narrative, and of their respective capacities for elisions, correption, dovetails, overlengths, and all the rest. For brief statements, see *CP*, VII, 411, and *CW*, 1916. Neglect of this point vitiates much of the tabulated work in Mr. Drewitt's paper. Let anyone, remembering merely that imperatives and vocatives, the first and second persons in verbs, and the pronouns and pronominal adjectives of those persons are found only in speech, and

that presents and futures, conjunctives and optatives, and even infinitives are vastly more common there than in narrative, mark such forms in, for example, the list (b) on p. 281, (b) on p. 284, or the second list of instances of apocope on p. 294, and ponder the result. So determinedly oblivious of this consideration is Mr. Drewitt that on p. 283 he remarks that an infinitive like *ἔσσεσθαι* has only one certain instance in narrative, while there are 6 occurrences of *ἔσονται* in speech. He surely knows that, except for a rare infinitive or participle of purpose, the future may be said to be wholly confined to speech. A similar restriction of the conjunctive entirely neutralizes the effect of the discovery that "bacchiacs like *εἴπῃσι* are fairly common in speech."

It is by contemplation of mere totals, coupled with bold manipulation of individual cases, that the dative plurals in *-εσσι* are made to support the general position. The table on p. 290 is said to show that the "irregular *-εσσι*" encroaches, until it eventually "may be taken as normal." The number of "avoidable spondees," as they are called, has actually risen from 28 in Il.\* narrative to 53 in Odyssean speech. Proportionally to numbers of lines the latter should have only 35, so it has 18 in excess, but, when repetition in standing commonplace is allowed for on both sides, the difference almost vanishes. But had there been a real difference, would it have been startling? Perhaps the following will help to an answer. The list given in the second note on p. 290 of avoidable spondees in speeches shows an extraordinary difference *inside* the speech of B<sup>2</sup>, etc. In I and K the objectionable forms occur once in every 60 lines, in the other four books only once in every 220. In the one set it is between three and four times as common as in the other. If such a difference exists between parts of the same homogeneous section, can we wonder at a far smaller difference between one section and another? Is nothing to be assigned to the inexplicable but by no means negligible residuum of cause which we are obliged to label chance? Is there anything sinister in the fact that *καλός* is never used in the genitive plural, or about the following occurrences in the poems, *ἄλλου* only 9 times, but *ἄλλον*, 80, and *ἄλλος* over 100?

But, as the inference from the table is evidently an extreme one, which would hardly impress even a careless reader, the conclusion

is supported by four frequently recurring datives, *ἄνδρεσσι*, *νήεσσι*, *πάντεσσι*, and *χείρεσσι*, some of which are said to give "a beautifully clear and *unforced* illustration of the way in which the verse degenerates." From the occurrences of the first and fourth nothing is to be extracted, and the second can be made profitable only by a desperate juggle with *νέεσσι* and resort to an assumption of "transferred speech-scansions." The third, *πάντεσσι*, seems at first sight to give support, and one would be only too glad to admit an occasional bright spot in such a weary waste of error. But when one reflects that the total occurrences of all plural forms of *πᾶς* are 3 in the *Odyssey* to 2 in the *Iliad*, and that there is much more speech in the *Odyssey* than in the *Iliad*, and when one allows for standing commonplace, the degeneration in *πάντεσσι* is hardly worth mentioning. An individual word proves nothing. It is hard, on the principles adopted, to explain the fact that *στήθεσσι* is almost as plentiful in Il.\* narrative as in Odyssean speech. To be sure it is in a category which is not considered, but the classification of these forms which excludes it is made without reference to the controversy which has long been carried on regarding their origin. It seems futile, while that dispute is still unsettled, to reason on mere figures for divisions of the poems which have been arbitrarily fixed. A comparison for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* would appeal to many. It would be usefully confined to words common to the two epics, and it would not exclude words which might give *-εσσι* but do not. The survey in Mr. Drewitt's paper is quite inadequate.

The tables given are of no interest, and but few remarks on the tests I have made at other points will suffice here. Take two words to which some prominence is assigned. First, *ὄσος*, *τόσος*, etc.: as these words are used nearly 3 times as often in speech as in narrative, any forms deemed bad must also be more frequent there. Similarly, the deictic *τοσ(σσ)όςδε*, *τοσ(σσ)οὔτος* never occur in narrative (nor *τοίσδεσσι* or any other inflection of *ὅδε*). It is no wonder that all these give the vetoed scansion. The other word, *μέσ(σσ)ος*, is entirely against the notion propounded, so an explanation has to be found. "If *μέσατος* [which occurs in Homer only in the form *μέσσατος*, Θ 223=Λ 6] is possible, the early examples are easy to explain." But *μέσατος* has always been taken to be a superlative, like *νέατος*,

ὑπατος, etc., and it is strange a superlative should be earlier than a positive, or that a positive should swamp a superlative almost out of existence. This may have happened, but instances are not given.

The faultiness of the method is well shown in the discussion of the pairs of names of Odysseus and Achilles. We are assured that Ὀδυσσεύς and Ἀχιλλεύς were the real original forms, the basis of this new theory being a proof that Ὀδυσσεύς is original and Ὀδυσσεύς merely metrical. But the proof cannot be accepted. Its author has an idea that the foundation of the *Iliad*, what used to be called the *Kern*, is not the familiar *Mēnis*, but “four self-existent ἀριστεῖαι (in E, A, II, and P).” In one of these primeval tracts, A 310–488, the occurrences of the form Ὀδυσσεύς predominate, and this, with help from assumptions regarding what are denominated “true,” “standing,” “most improbable,” and “downright impossible” scansion, “dove-tails,” and “rare devices” in “late work,” leaves no doubt that it is the earlier form. But all depends on the pristine character of this tract in A, and as to that there are many critics of the Dissecting school who will not agree for a moment. The first half of the passage has always been gravely suspected. Robert, for instance, in his great work characterized it as *zweifelloos eine jüngere Einlage*, and that, be it observed, on linguistic as well as on other grounds, and put it in his third *Iliad*. But there is no need to quote authorities. One can take another method. Consider Ὀδυσσεύς in some of the tracts which are to all Dissectors despicably late. In the “Continuation” of the *Odyssey* and in the *Telemachy*, when one considers the nature of the occurrences of the older form Ὀδυσσεύς, it more than holds its own. In—almost *horresco referens*—the *Doloneia* there are 11 occurrences of each form in narrative, and, if with Mr. Drewitt we exclude from consideration introductions to and resumptions from speeches, 8 of the genuine form to 4 of the newer one. Even in speech there are 4 of the former to 1 of the latter. The criterion on which the proof is based cannot be accepted as a criterion at all. Then Achilles is dragged in—mercifully Ἀπόλλων kept his name, θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται—and an elaborate table of the occurrences of the two forms of his name and that of Odysseus is given, which is held to prove without more ado that the one name affected the other. But we are simply to make up our minds on totals; we are not to examine

details. We are not to consider the different lengths of the six sections into which the poems have been artificially subdivided, the very different parts in these sections which the two protagonists play, the effect of the suitability of the forms with the double consonant for the end of the verse and the enormous totals of the occurrences there, the large proportion of the occurrences of all four forms which are mere repetitions of standing commonplace, or the introductions to and resumptions from speeches; we are simply invited to execute a statistical goose-step, looking neither to the left hand nor to the right, but keeping our eyes to the front on the mere brute totals and seeing nothing but what we are told is evident on the face of them. It is the statistical method reduced *ad absurdum*.

In regard to the "avoidable spondee," it is unfortunate that the thing is not defined. It is no doubt a spondee that could have been avoided, but who is to decide, and how are people to agree on, the point whether the poet or poets are free from blame in strewing this blemish about their compositions? How many absolutely indispensable spondees are there in Homer outside proper names? His *polyonymia* bids us reply, very few. But for present purposes we must dub a spondee avoidable whenever we are bidden. Some have been discovered which are peculiar to B<sup>2</sup>, etc., or to the *Odyssey*—though none, apparently, to parts of Il.\* which are, in universal Dissecting opinion, as late and debased as they are. One such is *ἰμεπρός*, used once of a river. The author of the *Boiotia* should of course have used *ἰμερόεις*, which occurs 9 times in the rest of the poems, though never with a proper name. Was ever poet in this temper badgered? And will it be asserted that a similar list cannot be prepared for that hotch-potch of late and early elements, Il.\*? Again, "since *-ηθεν* from *-η-* stems may represent *-ηφιν*," we are invited, without further explanation of the effect of the suffix, to compare the spondaic examples. The comparison proves nothing. And so for *ἐντοσθε* and *ἐκτοσθε*. It is said that "*-εσκ|ε -ον* of the iterative is not found in the narrative of Il.\*" But it is, once, and the instances in speech can be reduced, as they include repetitions. In fact, had the composers of Il.\* given us two and a fraction more instances, there would have been equality. Next we are introduced to *μῦθος* and *ποιῶ*. The not very clear statement regarding



them seems to suggest that they have in many cases replaced, or been badly used for, *ἔπος* and *τεῦχω*. Evidently there were synonyms—or “equivalents”—in Homeric times, if there are none in modern languages. But again there is marked disregard of the extent to which some words are appropriated by speech. For example, *μῦθος*, though it occurs in the poems 293 times, appears in narrative proper only 19 times, while 274 are either in speech or in the introductions to and resumptions from speeches. If *μῦθος* is mishandled more in speech than in narrative, we can hardly complain. *τελευτάω* is another verb which occurs just once in narrative, outside a common formula. So for *τοιούτος* and the remark that there is in the *Odyssey*—where speech predominates!—“an increasing freedom in the use of the spondaic *οὔτος* and *τοιόσδε*.” The writer surely cannot be unaware that the latter word is entirely, and the former almost wholly, confined to speech. He adds *ἐνταῦθα*, which is found in Homer once! The three occurrences of *ἐνταυθοῖ* may be allowed him in addition. But there is no gilding these bits of dross.

The paper ends with a list designed to illustrate the tendency to increasing use of spondaics in “later work,” a designation which vitiates all. But the list is so weak as hardly to deserve criticism. How can anyone be sure that *ἀλλοῖος*, *αἰδοῖος* and *ἀφνειός* contain spondees? Is *αἰδοίοισι*, ο 373, certainly the exact equivalent of *ικέτησι*? Monro (*a.l.*) is far from thinking so. If words so pertinent to the subject of the *Odyssey* as *αἰτίζω*, *κεχρημένος*, *ἑσθής* are to be quoted, what of the host of words in Il.\* like *αἰχμή -τής*, *ἐγχείη*, *ὑσμίνη*? Friedländer's *Verzeichnisse* had better be referred to. How could the imperative *παρφάσθαι* be used out of speech? *ιδρύω*, *τόλμησε*, *αἰτέω* do not support the contention set up or only very weakly, *ιερή ἴς* is naturally used before a following initial consonant as an alternative to *ιερόν μένος*. *μεταλλῆσαι* is used 5 times out of 6 in a standing expression, always final in the verse. The occurrences of *ἦμος*, always in time formulae in narrative, are worth examining. Simply because the *Odyssey* has these formulae more frequently than the *Iliad*, an unfavorable inference must be drawn. Even *βίη Τεύκροιο* and *Λεοντήος μένος*, which occur just once each, are made to swell the list. And so on. The poor poet! About *Ἀχιλλῆος κεφαλῇ* there seems to be some mistake. But it is cruel to

examine these lists closely. Instead, one may remark that there appears to be an implication that such a list could not be compiled for Il.\* Will that be flatly asserted? And, finally, there is this point. Counters of spondees and dactyls in Homer have not agreed in their results, as there is disagreement on some textual points—the augment and the resolution of diphthongs, for instance. The probability is, and it may sound strange to some readers of Homer, that there is a very slight excess of spondees in the *Odyssey*. But, if the depraved tendency which has now been discovered, and which strangely enough was of force, if not rampant, in what is called “early work,” had been operating and growing during the centuries which elapsed between the birth of the four self-subsistent ἀριστέλαι and the last patching of the *Odyssey*, its effect in the multiplication of spondees in the later poem would have been most marked. As we find no such great excess, we cannot believe the poetry was subject to this alleged influence. μνηστήρ—giving well on to 300 spondees!—is certainly one of the causes of the small excess in the *Odyssey*. As to an excess of spondees in speech over narrative, my tests lead me to reject it. Comparing (on the Oxford text) the worst and latest with the best and earliest, that is, the 367 lines in speech in the “Continuation” of the *Odyssey* with the first 367 lines in narrative in the *Iliad*, I find the spondees (excluding those final in the verse) are respectively 461 and 448. There is not much degeneration there. But strangely enough the first 367 lines in speech in the *Iliad* yield only 420, or actually fewer than the narrative. Numbers of course vary very much. In the first 253 lines of the *Doloneia* the proportion of spondees in speech and narrative is the same. Testing the *Kyklopeia*, 105–370, I find about 3 spondees to every 2 lines; in Nestor’s speech in γ 102–200, not a whole one to a line. I wonder if any narrative can be found which matches it. It is surpassed by Hephaestus’ excited little outburst in θ 306–20. The original “self-subsistent” Aristeia in Λ, and the slaying of Hector, X 90–394, give practically the same number of spondees in speech and narrative. The *Hoplopoiia*, Σ 468–617, all narrative, is well weighted, far more so than speech generally. So for the first stretch of narrative in the *Odyssey*, α 96–157. I see some reason for believing that this is a matter in which the distinction, already mentioned, between two

kinds of speech is worth bearing in mind. That subject-matter must have an influence goes without saying. And poets have their moods and may change their styles. Certainly we have not had the last word on the point.

As in the case of the augment, so for the forms now under consideration, the statistics fail to convince wherever they are tested, and those who believe, in whatever degree, in the unity of the poetry do not need to be disturbed by the very positive tone in which the results are announced. Not many are able to spare laborious days for the examination of such statistics, but those who can will find their reward in confirmed conviction as to the uniformity of the language and verse of Homer. The papers will doubtless be accepted by some Dissectors, and quoted in the future, as proving indubitably that the poems are the work of innumerable hands. Such assertions should be neglected unless accompanied by an assurance that those who make them have examined the statistics and looked up and studied the nature of the relevant citations for themselves. When Mr. Drewitt's first paper appeared, Professor Murray accepted the results at once as "proved." It would be interesting to know how many weeks, for weeks would be necessary, the professor devoted to the verification of the statistics, and whether it occurred to him that there is an outstanding difference between the forms and vocabulary of speech and those of narrative which Mr. Drewitt has never even noticed. Here is an undeniable divergence which must affect the verse—it makes, for instance, correction of a final long vowel or diphthong just *twice* as frequent in speech as in narrative—and any comparison of the metrical facts which ignores it is useless. But the main point in regard to the present theory is that the statistics do not support it. On the contrary, the method of interpretation is so defective in its disregard of essentials as to call for the strongest possible protest. The  $\kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{o}\varsigma$   $\alpha\lambda\lambda\acute{o}\varsigma$  cases is a glaring instance of its application. Things have really come to a pass when we are told we *must* accept a notion which can be refuted by a mere count in the *Index Homericus*. There was ground for hoping that this reckless forcing of facts and figures to fit some fancy had ceased, but the practice evidently dies hard, infructuous though every effort of the kind has been. The fixed idea is still there.